

## Bois D’Arc Creek (0202A) Recreational Use Attainability Analysis Summary and Recommendation

A recreational use attainability analysis (RUAA) was conducted on Bois D’Arc Creek (0202A) in the summer of 2014 to determine the appropriate recreational use and numeric criteria. Bois D’Arc Creek is an unclassified perennial water body that is approximately 68 miles in length. The creek is located in Grayson and Fannin counties. It was identified in the 2012 Texas Clean Water Act Section 303(d) List of Impaired Water Bodies due to elevated bacteria levels. It was initially listed in 2010.

The RUAA identified that the presumed use of primary contact recreation (PCR) for Bois D’Arc Creek should be revised to secondary contact recreation 1 (SCR 1). SCR applies to water bodies where water recreation can occur, but the nature of the recreation does not involve a significant risk of ingestion. SCR 1 applies to intermittent and perennial freshwaters where site-specific information demonstrates that primary contact recreation has little to no likelihood of occurring due to physical characteristics of the water body such as shallow depths or lack of pools.

During the field surveys, field staff observed fishing at one site, and no other forms of recreation were observed on the stream. Interviews with stakeholders and landowners indicated they have never personally used, witnessed, or heard of PCR on the stream. Several interviews indicated fishing as a personal, observed, and heard of use. Boating was reported as observed by three interviewees. Hunting is the most common reported use of Bois D’Arc Creek. Bois D’Arc Creek had an average thalweg of 0.48 meters (18.89 in) and three pools deeper than 1 meter. Stream flow was high to normal during the first survey, but low to no flow conditions were encountered during the second survey. At the time of the surveys, Bois D’Arc Creek had a mid-range Palmer drought index. Public access is available at 18 of 26 survey sites via bridge crossings but eight of those sites bordered private property and fencing hindered further access. There are no public parks on the creek. Access into the stream is overall moderately difficult due to steep banks and dense vegetation.

Naturally low water levels decrease the likelihood of PCR use. Bois D’Arc Creek has a shallow average depth and no accounts of PCR, supporting reclassification to SCR1. In accordance with §307.4 (j)(3)(C) of the Texas Surface Water Quality Standards, the TCEQ recommends a reclassification from PCR to SCR1 with the corresponding geometric mean of 630 colonies *E. coli*/100mL for all of Bois D’Arc Creek, from the confluence with the Red River upstream to the headwaters northwest of Whitewright in Grayson County. This reclassification is appropriate due to “natural, ephemeral, intermittent low flow conditions or water levels” in accordance with reasons specified in 40 CFR §131.10(g)(2).

Prior to changing the currently assigned recreational use of Bois D’Arc Creek in the Texas Surface Water Quality Standards, the TCEQ would provide additional public notice and opportunity for public comment. In addition, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency would review this proposed change under the provisions of the federal Clean Water Act.